Best Practices Checklist and Recommendations for Reopening a Hotel after a Temporary Closure

April 15, 2020

These recommendations for best practices are intended for temporarily closed hotels and are NOT to be utilised for any hotels that have been used as a quarantine facility or for housing for individuals working with potentially COVID-19 infected individuals (e.g., health care workers or first responders).

Consider consulting a lawyer or other subject matter experts on topics related to the COVID-19 crisis, including but not limited to employment, finance, and insurance matters.
Local government agencies should be contacted to ensure hotel management is aware of any local restrictions in place that could prohibit reopening or otherwise impact the reopening process and to understand a timeline for those restrictions.

45-30 days prior

- ☐ Schedule a meeting with your BWH Revenue Manager to review forecasts, develop a rate strategy, and determine best reopening date.
- ☐ Once a date is determined, open ALL rate levels and ensure that all inventory is available to sell and open on all platforms.
    - Open Rate Level A for the dates that the Property was closed. This should be in the property management system ("PMS") which should open MemberWEB as well. If not, you can also open it through the MemberWEB Modify Level Status feature.
    - Note: if only done in MemberWEB, it is possible that the PMS could close the status upon the next update if the status in the PMS is still closed, so it is recommended to open inventory in the PMS first, and then verify that the change was sent to MemberWEB. Changes should only be done in MemberWEB if the changes you made in the PMS are not being reflected within a short time.

30-14 days prior

- ☐ Schedule a meeting with your BWH Revenue Manager to discuss plans for reopening and messaging regular business clients. Discuss a plan for a grand reopening 45 to 90 days after initial reopening.
- ☐ Attend Revenue Optimization Webinar scheduled for the 29th April.
- ☐ Notify all corporate accounts via mail or email regarding the reopening and the dates. Personally, call all accounts, if possible, especially high valued accounts.
- ☐ Review all groups and blocks on the books and reach out to the bookers to advise that the hotel is reopening and to confirm that their booking is still going ahead and all the details on the block are still accurate.

14 days prior

- ☐ Notify employees of the reopening date. Inform them that more communication will be coming soon to schedule deep cleaning, preventative maintenance, and meetings prior to reopening.
- ☐ Notify your lender, insurance carrier, utilities (Water/Sewer/Garbage), telephone and internet, fire life and safety, and all other vendors of the reopening date.
- ☐ Confirm hotel's credit terms and contract to ensure you can still order supplies.
- ☐ Schedule a follow up call with your BWH Revenue Manager to review occupancy forecasts so that you may determine staffing needs for the reopening. Review rate strategy and discuss sales opportunities moving forward and details of grand reopening celebration.

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- ☐ Based on occupancy forecasts call staff that you intend to recall or re-hire and establish start dates for all staff members. Identify those who won't be returning and assess future staffing needs accordingly. Inventory your supply of uniforms and other supplies and order additional uniforms and supplies as needed.
- ☐ Have maintenance staff conduct a carbon monoxide detector review to ensure you have properly working carbon monoxide detectors in all guest rooms, all areas where fuel is burned (e.g., pool heater, boiler, laundry), all rooms adjacent to rooms where fuel is burned, and all public areas. Log the review and any efforts to install or replace any detectors. Ensure this is conducted before staff is brought back into the building. If your carbon monoxide detectors are monitored by a third party, contact that vendor to perform a test to ensure all detectors on its system are working properly.
- ☐ Begin planning for the enhanced cleaning and disinfection of all public areas, offices, and guest rooms as applicable. Note that this is not standard deep cleaning and preventive maintenance a. If using an outside vendor, contact the vendor for pricing and schedule availability. If using in-house staff, contact them to schedule their work shifts and review applicable checklists and secure the needed supplies. See also the following resources:
    - "COVID-19 Printable Checklist Housekeeping."
    - Also review the documents and any latest updated materials on the member portal and other local government agencies and
        - World Health Organization https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1
        - Best Western member portal

10 days prior

- ☐ Complete Arrivals Check for the next two weeks to avoid any unforeseen no-shows or excessive amount of cancellations.
- ☐ Complete all enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of guest rooms and public areas using checklists and logs to track and maintain.
- ☐ Perform an inventory of guest room supplies and reorder as needed.
- ☐ Verify that you have adequate disinfecting supplies available.

7 days prior

- ☐ Housekeeping and maintenance staff should check each room and all public areas to ensure cleanliness and working order of all guest use items and areas. Verify all guest room and door locks are working.
- ☐ Walk exterior of building – access landscaping and parking lot needs (you may need to have lead time in getting any needed contractors to come to the property)
- ☐ Schedule a follow up call with your BWH Revenue Manager to review occupancy forecasts and review rate strategies for the next 90 days.
- ☐ Schedule an all staff meeting. Set a positive tone, consider providing lunch or snacks!
    - Provide instruction regarding I CARE® Principles and the concept of Every Guest Every Time Principles. Consider requiring staff to complete the applicable online training content in BWI University or showing the training during your staff meeting.
    - Provide instruction on Best Western Rewards® (enrolment and elite recognition standards).
    - Your team has spent a great deal of time deep cleaning and maintaining the hotel, preparing it for your guests. Share how you will communicate these and future cleaning efforts to the guest.
    - Review daily, weekly, and monthly check lists for cleaning and preventative maintenance to ensure all staff are aligned, knowledgeable and trained.
    - Review employee handbook and have re-hired and newly hired employees complete any necessary paperwork and training.
- ☐ Review forecasts, corporate guest bookings, leisure guest bookings, and group bookings.

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- ☐ Based on closure length, verify if fire safety equipment (alarms), pool certifications (if applicable) and health department certifications need to be updated. Test all carbon monoxide detectors and record this into the monthly carbon monoxide inspection log.
- ☐ Conduct inventory of breakfast food and equipment with your breakfast attendant. Review current breakfast requirements or restrictions to decide the best option for the property and how you will serve it. Place order with food supplier.

2-3 days prior

- ☐ Inspect all guest rooms and public spaces for cleanliness, safety, maintenance, and other guest-related matters. Revisit any areas not meeting your expectations and requirements with the team so that they may correct.
- ☐ Front desk staffed 24 hours a day to answer all phone calls at property level.
- ☐ Review arrivals and call all guests to pre-welcome them to your hotel.
- ☐ Make several test phone calls to your hotel from random guest rooms to ensure the phone and switchboard system is working correctly.
- ☐ Consider "role playing" with your staff on questions that might be posed by your guests on why you were closed and what steps you have taken to help ensure guest safety.
- ☐ Place hand sanitisers at your front desk and in the breakfast area. Ensure you have adequate cleaning supplies to clean key cards and all lobby and restaurant surfaces.

1 day prior

- ☐ Email your BWH Revenue Manager to advise of reopening to update Google, TripAdvisor and property alerts.
- ☐ Re-inspect all guest rooms and public spaces. Revisit any areas not meeting your expectations and requirements with the team so that they may correct.
- ☐ Hold stand up meeting with team to discuss the next day's events.
- ☐ Perform a practice run of breakfast setup, ensuring it meets your expectations and current brand requirements. Invite staff to eat and provide feedback.
- ☐ Hold another call with your BWH Revenue Manager to review forecasts and review rate strategies for the next 90 days.
- ☐ If applicable, post all guest messaging and invitations for official Grand Reopening.

Day of Re-Opening:

- ☐ Unlock the doors, turn on all applicable lights and signage.
- ☐ Consider having additional staff at the hotel for this day.
- ☐ General Manager: work the lobby all day welcoming your guests and sharing all you have done to prepare the hotel for their arrival.
- ☐ Consider a guest facing message to customers to inform them of the cleaning and safety steps the hotel has implemented in re-opening, to help ensure guest safety and security.

Notice: the above best practices are recommendations only and not requirements. The Property's ownership is responsible for taking all appropriate and reasonable actions regarding the reopening process and ensuring any and all brand, local government and other requirements are in place and compliant.

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